

**Affordable Housing Advisory Committee
Pinellas County
June 7, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) (as created by the Florida Statutes 420.9076(2) and Pinellas County Ordinance 93-30, as amended) met in regular session at 4:02 PM on this date in the Palm Room at the Pinellas County Communications Building, 333 Chestnut Street, Clearwater, Florida.

Present

Robyn Fiel, Chairman, Housing Finance Authority (HFA) Member, Mortgage/Real Estate Professional
Steven Beal, HFA Member, Low-Income Advocate
Paul Burroughs, HFA Member, Banking Industry
Sean King, Not-for-Profit Developer of Affordable Housing
Shannon L. Love, Resident of Jurisdiction
Frances M. Pheeny, Not-for-Profit Provider of Affordable Housing
Brian Scott, County Commissioner, Elected Official
Kim Wagner, HFA Member, For-Profit Provider of Affordable Housing

Not Present

Denise M. Deja, Low-Income Advocate

Others Present

Sheri Harris, Pinellas County Housing Section Manager
Daphne Johnson-McCluster, Pinellas County Senior Community Planning Specialist
Rebecca Stonefield, Pinellas County Strategic Initiatives Manager
Teresa Ribble, Board Reporter, Deputy Clerk
Other interested individuals

All documents provided to the Clerk's Office have been made a part of the record.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Fiel called the meeting to order at 4:02 PM and requested that those in attendance introduce themselves.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Scott to approve the meeting minutes of October 7, 2022 and February 1, 2023. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wagner and carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Surplus Properties Discussion

Department of Administrative Services' Deputy Director Diana Sweeney provided an overview of the County's surplus property program, including an approximate number of land parcels owned by the County and the process utilized to determine whether the County needs a property for public use or whether it can be deemed as surplus. She related that a database is being built, which will identify all County-owned properties, how each is being utilized, custodial owner, and suitability for affordable housing; and that the database will be in place by October 1.

Overview of Summit – Next Steps

Ms. Stonefield expressed appreciation to all who attended the 2023 Homes for Pinellas Summit and provided the following information regarding outcomes and next steps:

- Nearly 30% of the attendees pledged support to take part in implementation of the Housing Action Plan. There is still an opportunity for others to pledge participation in the process.
- During the afternoon portion of the Summit, attendees were provided with the goals associated with the Housing Action Plan and were given the opportunity to discuss methods for moving the goals forward.
- Next steps include local Countywide Housing Compact members endorsement of the Housing Action Plan, prioritization of identified actions, and coordination with Compact partners and stakeholders regarding identification and potential timelines for additional future actions.

Ms. Harris added that efforts are being made to create similar program requirements from a regulatory standpoint, such as with entitlement communities, so that potential home buyers and homeowners do not have to contend with different rules for various programs within the county. She noted that there has been success with stakeholders supporting this concept with the down payment assistance program.

Mr. Beal shared that he attended the Summit, observing that there was evidence of considerable interest in participation by the attendees and inquired as to plans for maintaining that level of momentum.

In response to Mr. Beal's query, Ms. Stonefield indicated that it will be the responsibility of County staff and Compact partner, Forward Pinellas, to get the appropriate subject matter experts and stakeholders to the table for programmatic and brainstorming discussions in order to move toward solutions.

Responding to queries by Mr. King, Ms. Stonefield provided the following information:

- Each goal for the Housing Action Plan contains a series of approximately three to five associated actions, with the intent of each goal to provide a broad effect towards achieving such outcomes as healthy communities and effective mobility, as well as how they connect to housing.
- Early actions will be identification of what the end targets are, and development of an accurate assessment will be required so that there is an understanding of the potential challenges and barriers related to affordable housing.

SB 102 Summary Sheet – New Funding

Referring to handouts provided to the members, Ms. Harris explained various aspects of Senate Bill 102, also known as the Live Local Act, including that it provides for an array of affordable housing policies related to tax incentives, land use tools, publicly-owned land, and a state housing strategy; whereupon, she indicated that the County will initially receive \$5.6 million in State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) Program funding, which is a large increase; and that the State Apartment Incentive Loan (SAIL) Program will receive a significant increase in funding for a total of \$100 million.

Referring to the handout titled *Comparing the "Missing Middle" exemption and the Local Option Property Tax Exemption*, Ms. Harris briefly discussed its contents, noting that she believes the goal of the potential "missing middle" exemption is to allow tax credits for developers who intertwine affordable units within a market rate development; and that she has questions regarding who would administer and monitor adherence to the affordability requirements; whereupon, Ms. Stonefield related that staff is working with the County Attorney's Office to develop an understanding of regulatory aspects of the Live Local Act.

Responding to a query by Commissioner Scott, Mr. King explained that the Live Local Act relates specifically to multi-family for-profit developments, to the exclusion of multi-family homeownership such as townhome communities.

A discussion ensued involving remarks related to the following topics:

- Consideration of a local tax exemption for multi-family rental developments
- Concern regarding rising insurance costs
- Contemplation of monetizing potential property tax abatement
- Practicality of property rehabilitations, with the benefit of a property tax exemption, as opposed to new developments
- Local outreach and educational efforts to clear up possible public misconceptions regarding the Live Local Act
- Additional information from the Florida Housing Coalition regarding the Live Local Act likely

Responding to a query by Chairman Fiel, Ms. Harris related that the first allocation of SHIP funding for the County should occur on July 1; whereupon, in response to a query by Ms. Harris, Chairman Beal indicated that he believes that the Live Local Act provides some level of priority regarding the rehabilitation of existing structures.

In response to a query by Ms. Wagner, Pinellas County Housing Authority Executive Director Neil Brickfield provided an explanation of the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program; whereupon, a discussion ensued regarding the following points:

- Reasons for unsuccessful usage of a voucher, including rising rental costs and barriers related to transportation and locations of rental units
- Challenge of security deposit costs
- Income discrimination by developments
- Department of Housing and Urban Development standards for HCV landlords
- Current successful partnerships with for-profit developers who have placed vouchers within their developments

Ms. Harris noted that there will be additional affordable housing incentives to review at the next meeting, which is in tandem with the work that is being done to prepare the SHIP Annual Report for presentation to this Committee in October; whereupon, she invited members to notify her if there are additional items that they would like added to the agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Fiel adjourned the meeting at 4:44 PM.